



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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REPORT ON 1948-49 FUR CATCH ISSUED BY FWS

Fur takes are decreasing while the populations of wild fur-animals are increasing, according to Frank G. Ashbrook, in charge of Wild Fur-Animal Investigations for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in his annual report on the fur catch in the United States and Alaska. The report, issued as Wildlife Leaflet 315, is a free publication of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Warehouses are bulging with raccoon, opossum, skunk, fox and coyote furs," Ashbrook says in his introduction. "These are the 'unwanted furs' -- according to the trade designation. A considerable number of raw furs are only worth 25 cents or less per pelt on the market, and, in some states, local raw fur receiving houses are not buying certain species of long-haired furs.

"Some ideas advanced to build up the market for these long-haired furs including shearing, clipping and dyeing to make a 'new and exotic' product. Already, stylists have shown crimson and green fur coats. Experiments in the production of fancy leathers from unwanted skins also continues apace. Suede shoes, gloves, 'chamois', billfolds, and unique bookbindings are only a few of the products manufacturers hope to make out of such skins as raccoon, opossum and coyote."

Some operators of warehouses that are full of cheap raccoon skins have recently expressed the hope that "Dan'l Boone" caps of raccoon fur -- with tails flying out behind -- would become a style-hit again with teenagers, skiers and others, says Ashbrook. A revival of the old "Joe College" raccoon skin coats, though, is not looked for. The labor involved in making up a coat runs into too much expense. But the Daniel Boone cap, say the fur operators, would make a wonderful small home industry for many towns.

Mr. Ashbrook's leaflet, "Annual Fur Catch of the United States," lists the reported take of wild fur animals in the various states and Alaska for the five seasons from 1944-45 to 1948-49. The reported catch for each state is broken down among the various animals trapped in that state. The report may be obtained free by requesting "Wildlife Leaflet 315" from the Division of Information, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington 25, D. C.

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